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Leroy Garrett, Editor

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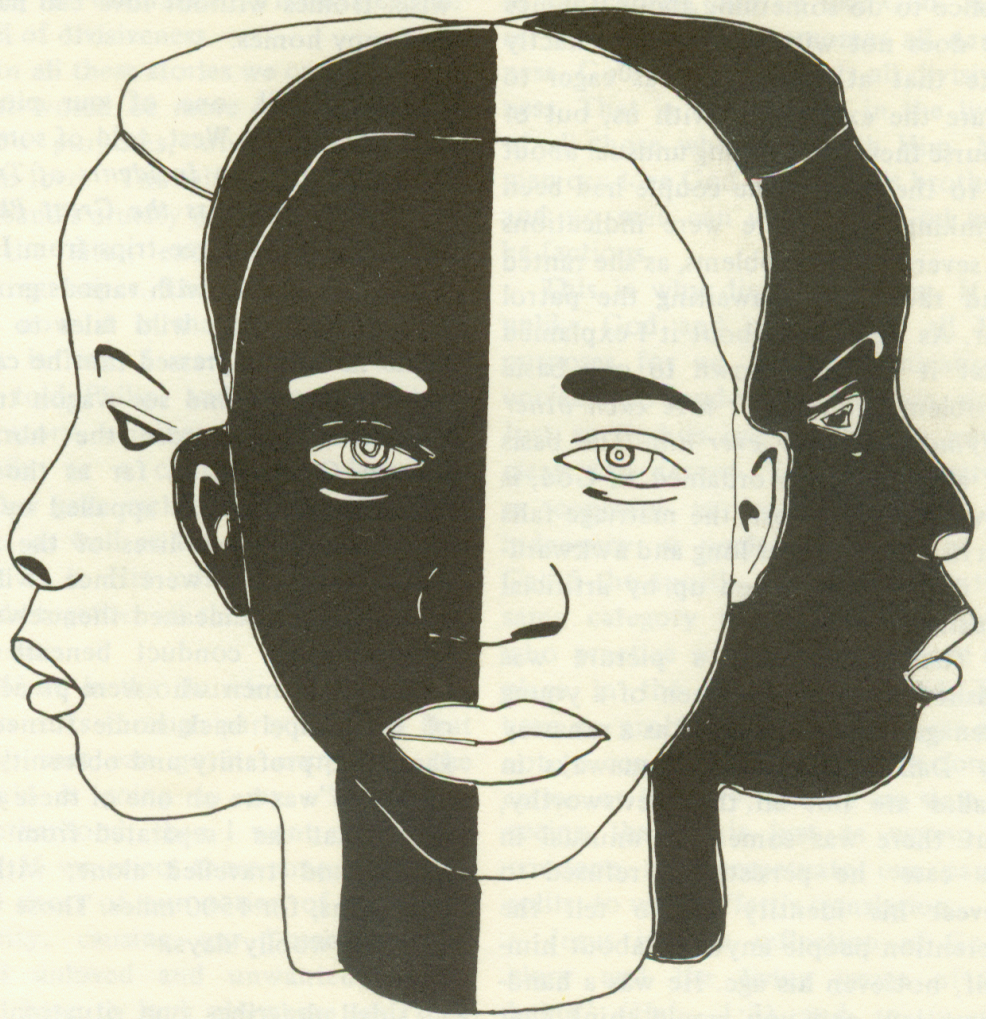

ROOTS: THEIRS AND OURS
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No one can doubt that the wave of the future is not the conquest of the world by a single dogmatic creed but the liberation of the diverse energies of free nations and free men. *–John F. Kennedy*

Volume 19, No. 3 **Leroy Garrett, Editor** **March 1977**

Principles of Unity and Fellowship . . .

LOVE: THE UNIFYING POWER OF THE GODHEAD

Our son Philip has been working at a neighborhood drive-in grocery. He came home the other night excited over an incident that took place in his store. In came this distraught woman, battered and bloodied, wanting him to call the police. Her husband had beaten her and stolen away in *her* car, leaving her stranded, and she wanted the police to do something about it. Since he does not witness anything exactly like that at home, he was eager to share the excitement with us, but of course there was nothing unusual about it to the police. The couple had been drinking, and there were indications of several other problems, as she ranted and raved while awaiting the patrol car. As we talked about it I explained that it all boils down to one basic problem: *they don't love each other anymore, if they ever did.* The basis of a marriage, as ordained of God, is love. If that is lost, the marriage falls on its face, however long and awkwardly it is kept propped up by artificial means.

The other night a picture was flashed on the TV screen of a young teenager who is being held as a runaway by Dallas authorities. Runaways in Dallas are not all that newsworthy, but there was something unusual in his case: he persistently refused to reveal his identity or to tell the detention people anything about himself, not even his age. He was a handsome lad, and you would think that any parent would be eager to issue their claim for such a son, but they

were slow in coming out of hiding. And the boy wouldn't tell who he was because he didn't want to go back home. His problem too is as simple as it is complex: he doesn't feel loved and wanted, and he has probably not yet learned to love others. God's philanthropy in creating the home would quite obviously have it otherwise. Homes without love can hardly be happy homes.

John Udell, one of our pioneer preachers in the West, told of some of his experiences in *Incidents of Travel to California across the Great Plains,* 1856. He made three trips from Iowa to California afoot with various groups, and he had some wild tales to tell. While he was impressed that he could stand on a hill and see wagon trains stretched out across the horizon toward California as far as the eye could reach, he was appalled by the wretched, immoral lives of the emigrants. Men who were once civilized and Christian demeaned themselves in language and conduct beneath the brute. Even men who were preachers of the gospel back home turned to gambling, profanity and obscenity. So disgusted was he on one of these journeys that he separated from the others and traveled alone, without provisions, for 1500 miles. Those were wild and woolly days.

Udell describes one situation that especially caught my eye. It was common, he reports, to see companies and families travelling together that finally separated into smaller units because of quarreling and fighting. In some cases brothers would dispute, cut their wagon into two carts, and

pursue each his journey alone. Can't you just see that, out on the great American desert where people are sorely in need of each other's resources and strength, two brothers dividing their meager supplies, even to cutting their wagons into two parts. It dramatically illustrates the peril of divisiveness.

In all these stories we can easily see what would be more in keeping with God's purposes, who has "destined us in love." The wife bloodied by her husband's cruelty once stood with him at the altar, exchanging vows and sharing hopes. Love made them one, but now it is shattered by sin. "If that is love, I want no part of it," she told Philip, and that about tells the story, whether it be a marriage, a family or a church. The' heavenly Father gave each of us the capacity to love, as well as the resources of love, and it is His cohesive power that holds together all these things that we treasure.

If we in the church cut our wagons into carts through party strife so that each sect can go its own way, the world is going to say, "If that is brotherhood, then I want no part of if." If we reject those among us who fall short of our notion of doctrinal purity, causing our "runaways" to feel unloved and unwanted, people will have to look elsewhere who seek the compassionate Christ.

God is unity. This is evident in all His handiwork, whether in His creation, legislation or redemption These three areas of His activity illustrate the nine attributes of God.

In creation He manifested His wisdom, power and goodness. In legislation (the laws and commandments He has given man) His truth, justice and holiness. In redemption (or salvation) His mercy, condescension and love. And all these are one, reflecting a single purpose, the ultimate glorification of redeemed humanity. Disunity stands over against all this, as darkness does light. There is no way for us to be divisive, whether in the family or in the church, and be like God. Just as God, as light, overcomes all darkness, God, as one, defeats all divisiveness. That is, He does so in the lives of all those who walk with Him. No man can love God and hate his brother, and no man can walk with God and be factious.

This is why division is a sin. It is unlike God and contrary to all His purposes for us. Just as fornication, uncleanness and indecency are sins. Just as God is one He is also pure, clean and decent. The party spirit is as contrary to being like God as indecency or uncleanness, and so in Gal. 5 the apostle puts them all in the same category and insists that they who practice such things shall have no place in the kingdom of God. We have no problem in seeing that we are not to condone and perpetuate fornication or idolatry, but we are slow in seeing that it is just as wrong to condone and perpetuate our party-splits, to use Moffatt's translation.

Jesus is "the reflection of God's glory and the living image of his being" (Heb. 1:3) and so *in the flesh*, in the likeness of their own nature, men saw all the attributes of God: wisdom, power, goodness; truth, justice, holiness; mercy, condescension, love. And all these are one in the Christ. Jesus manifested these attributes of God so as to make men and women one in himself. "If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation," says the apostle. Then he says: "All this comes from God, who through

Christ brought us into peace with himself, and gave us the ministry of peace-making" (2 Cor. 5:17-19). This is to say that Jesus' ministry was to make men one in God's family, to make them brothers. We are never so unlike the Christ than when we make havoc of the peace he cultivates in people's lives.

So it is with the mission of the Spirit in the heart of the believer. Unity is the Spirit's gift to the church. With gentleness, quietness, patience, and forbearing love we are to "preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Ro. 14:17 tells us that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy "in the Holy Spirit." Then Paul says: "He who so serves Christ is pleasing to God and approved by man." He goes on to call for that peace and love that builds up the church. We are not "for the sake of food" -our pet doctrines and traditions - ruin any work of God. The lesson is clear: a spirit of rivalry and hate destroys God's work; love saves and nourishes it.

In his love hymn in 1 Cor. 13 the apostle spells out the power of love as the Godhead's way of unity: "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy; love has no loud words in her mouth, no swelling thoughts in her heart; is not rude nor self-seeking nor easily angry; does not count up her wrongs; finds no pleasure in evil done to others, but delights in goodness. Love always forgives, always believes, always hopes, always bears patiently." (Williams)

There is no way for us to behave this way except by the power of the Spirit within us. It is natural, according to the flesh, for us to be self-serving, which is the real source of partyism. Self-denial, forgiveness, and forbearing love can never be our work, but must always be the Spirit's fruit.

This journal has for some years joined in what Henry Steele Commager calls "the search for a usable past," and we believe there is an important use for our history. One example will serve to illustrate this, one that shows how our pioneers came to see that love is the only unifying power that we have.

The decade following Alexander Campbell's death in 1866 was a discouraging period in our history. While we survived the Civil War without open division, our people were in the throes of controversy over several issues, instrumental music and the missionary society in particular. For a time it looked as if the whole thing would go down the drain. One man was to make the difference, and it was he that began a new era in responsible Christian journalism, and that was Isaac Errett, who began the *Christian Standard* the same year Campbell died.

He had learned the way of peace. As for the instrument, he favored it, but he urged no congregation to adopt it if there was even a minority that opposed it. As for societies, he sought to make love the arbiter. Errett set out to rescue the Movement from the bondage of the unwritten creeds that had emerged among us, threatening to divide. Campbell's death had unleashed a creedalism that only his presence had kept under control. Errett, perhaps more than any other editor (and we were directed by the Editor Bishops!), caught the essence of the Stone-Campbell plea.

Amidst all the controversy he sent out these words in the *Standard* (June 20, 1868): "Let the bond of union among the baptized be Christian character in place of orthodoxy - right doing in place of exact thinking; and outside of plain precepts, let all acknowledge the liberty of all, nor seek to impose limitations on their brethren, other than those of the law of love."

Errett realized that the bond of union had to be love and forbearance, not unanimity of doctrine. Unity is possible only in terms of right *behavior,* not exact thinking. Errett's emphasis is what is evident in the scriptures: the problems in the early church, including all the heresies, were primarily behavioral problems, not diversity of viewpoint. Let no brother impose any limitation upon another, apart from plain precepts, except the law of love. That is our freedom; that is our hope. It was the *Declaration and Address* all over again.

Writing on this, Garrison and Degroot in their history of Disciples say, "More than to any other journal and person, it was to the *Christian Standard* and Isaac Errett that the Disciples were indebted for being saved from becoming a fissiparous sect of jangling legalists."

Well, we got our share of jangling legalists, but it is to the credit of our people of the 1860's and 1870's that a majority of them listened to Errett.

The majority today, even among Churches of Christ, really believe what Errett believed: that the bond of love will bring us together as God's people and endear us to one another as brothers and sisters despite varying doctrinal interpretations. Most of our folk now realize that debating and dividing is a lost cause, making us no more than "a fissiaparous sect." Down deep in their hearts they want to reach out in love and claim all of God's children as their brothers and sisters. Had it been God's plan that we be brothers and sisters on the basis of seeing alike on all "the issues" (each sect among us has a different list!), there would never have been a family of God upon this earth - with even the apostles themselves being no exception!

So the apostle Paul sums it all up for us in Col. 3:14 "Above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." This is God's cohesive power, the great dynamic, for the unity of His people. There is no other way.

And it is the one message that rings clear to a lost world. A loving, united church has a powerful witness to broken homes and broken lives, to runaways, and to suffering humanity in general. *—the Editor*

The great criticism of the Church today is that no one wants to persecute it; because there is nothing very much to persecute it about. *—G. F. Mc Cleod*

You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give. *—Kahil Gibran*

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MY DOCTOR SAYS WE'LL HAVE BLADDERS IN HEAVEN

My physician here in Denton, an able osteopathic surgeon, has borne with my ailing bladder for more than a decade now. And he's done something that I am not likely to do: He's seen inside of it several times. I don't think he likes what he sees. And I don't like it without having seen! Since it is trabeculated, it is given to occasional infections; but the doctor thinks I am doing very well indeed. But the infections, when they do come, really drive me up the wall, and sometimes I despair of life itself. It is a very troublesome malady.

I had my first infection in almost two years the other day, so this time around I insisted that the doc simply put in a new one. He told me of the surgeon that used the glands of goats as implantations, but that the authorities had put him out of business. So he had no new bladders in stock! It was then that I asked him about heaven, as to whether he supposed we would have bladders, for I was sure that he would be as good an authority on such a subject as the next guy. He was certain that we would, and he was kind enough to add that he didn't think mine would be trabeculated any longer and I would be free of infections forever. Next to getting to see Alexander Campbell, that is likely to be my greatest reward!

Being the Mormon that he is, my physician friend may well believe that we will have much more of the mundane things in heaven than bladders. Joseph Smith, the prophet of Mormonism, not only had 50-odd wives in this world, but he had (or will have) hundreds, if not thousands, of "celestial" wives in the next. One Mormon writer tells of how women still choose to marry him in some temple service, hopeful of having him as a "celestial" husband. When the prophet was asked about Jesus saying that in heaven there would be no marrying or being given in marriage, he explained that that didn't apply to his saints.

This celestial marriage business is most intriguing. Why the Tempter did not think of this in Eden, I will never know, but he did indeed finally think of it, as late as it was. I often tell Ouida that I would like it fine if I could have her in heaven as well as on earth. Too pious to indulge in my frolicking, she responds by saying that we will surely in some way be special to each other. Well, the Mormons have this solved. A man can marry his earthly wife celestially in the temple and thus become sealed to her forever - for better or for worse! If I were a Mormon, I would be tempted to be sealed to Elizabeth I, "the great Queen," who had everything she wanted in this world, including an empire, except a husband. She should make great company, for she could even read the New Testament in Greek. She might, however, have trouble reading the Book of Mormon even in English, as sophisticated as she was. Since she was an Episcopalian, one might not be marrying "only in the Lord," but that could be solved first of all by being baptized for her. Some religions really put it all together, don't they?

Wives aside for the time, whether queens or not, I am wondering if my physician might be right about our having bladders in heaven. It may be more than a fun question, after all, so I would like to look into it for a moment - even if I can't look inside my bladder - with a little more seriousness than I have shown thus far.

Any question that touches upon what God has revealed, however meager be that revelation, is within the province of study. If God has said anything at all, it must be of some profit to us. To theorize is all right so long as we make it clear what we are doing, but even here it should be toward a better understanding of what God has revealed. Otherwise it will be vain speculation and of no value. And of course such opinions should never be imposed upon others as if they were matters of faith.

We may not have a bladder in God's tomorrow, but I believe the scriptures make it clear that each saint will have a body. I will venture the thesis that the believer will never be disembodied, not even temporarily. Paul appears to have believed this, for 2 Cor. 5:1-3 says: "We know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, so that by putting it on we may not be found naked." Not to have a body in which to dwell meant to the apostle that he would be naked - a disembodied spirit. The next verse makes it clear that he was willing for the new, heavenly body to be draped over his old, earthly body rather than be without a body: "We sigh with anxiety, not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life."

I conclude that if Paul's hope was realized that even now he has a body, an interim habitation of some sort, even before he inherits his redeemed earthly body in the resurrection. It would be difficult to conclude that he is now naked and disembodied, awaiting the last day so that he can have what he was so anxious to have, a house not made with hands. But this is a common view, that the saints are floating spirits of some kind, awaiting embodiment when Jesus comes again. Paul's language is rather clear. "We *know,"* he insists, "that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we will have a building from God." Without some compelling reason to the contrary, the interpreter must conclude that the heavenly body is given *when* the earthly body is destroyed. Paul's earthly body, one that was probably beheaded, was indeed destroyed, and it has long since turned to dust in some dark chamber. That body awaits a resurrection and a transformation "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," but as of now it remains dust. Where then is Paul now? He is with Christ in heaven and he has a body, a temporary habitation, we might call it, until he gets his old body back again in a glorious resurrection. But it does not necessarily follow that he now has or ever will again have a bladder!

The scriptures also make it clear that we are joint heirs with Christ. I take this to mean that the blessings that are his in glory are also ours. That he now has a body in heaven is a biblical fact. Paul describes him as the Savior we wait for, "who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21), and John tells us that when he appears "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as

he is" (1 Jn. 3:2). 1 Tim. 2:5 describes Jesus not only as our one mediator in heaven, but as a *man*, even now. He is a human being in a body in heaven, that is clear. That is not to say, however, that he has a bladder, even though he once had one in the days of his flesh.

This makes us wonder about the nature of Jesus' resurrected body. We do have some information. The bewildered Thomas, understandably skeptical, vowed that he would not believe that Jesus was again alive without corporeal evidence, unless he could see and touch, like a child wants to do in a department store. He cried out, "My Lord and my God", when Jesus appeared behind locked doors and invited him not only to look but to put forth his hand into his wounded side. Luke tells us even more. The apostles were together, hearing the report of the two disciples who had seen (and dined with) the risen Christ on the Emmaus road, when Jesus appeared in their midst. They were startled and frightened, supposing that they saw a spirit. "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have." (Luke 24:38-40)

Notice that he was "I myself", which means that he was as real as before, and yet he was very different. He was now in his resurrected (not merely resuscitated) body, and yet he had hands and feet. He was not merely a spirit, he said, for a spirit is without a body. I take it that once the eternal Christ became man in Mary's womb, where he grew a body, that he was never again disembodied, and that for all eternity. So it is with us as joint heirs with him. We will never simply be spirits, but we will always have a body.

There is more. Jesus moved about in his risen body, and this seems to be different, for he appeared and disappeared, with locked doors being as if they were not there. He apparently moved from Emmaus to Jerusalem or to the sea of Tiberius or wherever timelessly, which he did not do in his old body. He spent several days walking from Nazareth to the Jordan to be baptized. Throughout his earthly sojourn he yielded to time and space along with all men. But this changed with his resurrection. This tells us something of the nature of the resurrected body.

He also ate and drank. He even conducted a fish fry and ate of the goodies right before their eyes. He walked and talked, indeed he instructed the disciples for some forty days before he ascended to heaven. I surmise that he did not sleep. Perhaps he hovered between two worlds, appearing and disappearing. He would not need sleep as he did before, and I presume that he had no body waste as before, even if he did eat and drink.

He seems to have withheld his identity to those disciples on the Emmaus road. They took him for a stranger, another ordinary human being like themselves. When the three of them arrived at the village, Jesus acted as if he would walk on further, without them of course. They constrained him to stay with them. He stayed for supper. All this and still they did not know who he was. Since they had previously been with him, they would have easily recognized him at once. Was his appearance that of someone else, and his voice? Apparently. Then suddenly, at the breaking of bread, their eyes were opened, and just that quickly he disappeared. He might have been recognizable, the miracle being the blinding of

their eyes. But then there is Mary's confusing him with the gardener, and this after Jesus had talked to her. Only when he spoke her name did she recognize him. (Jn. 20:18) Was he unrecognizable and then recognizable, or did he control her power to discern?

In God's tomorrow I take it that we will be like Jesus. He ascended into heaven in his resurrected body. We too shall be embodied in glory. In the new earth wherein righteousness dwells we may very well move about as he did, with no regard to time or space. We will drink from the fountain of the water of life and eat from the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, one for each month. That indicates there will be time, but it will not end and there will be no night (Rev. 22:1-5). Surely we will continue to love, to learn, and to serve.

I would presume that Jesus' *resurrected* body needed no rest and did not grow tired. Things like glands and a digestive system were no longer relevant, for he was now a transcendent being. He was as earthly and he needed to be in order to complete his ministry. Yes, he ate and drank as he had before, but only for the sake of witnessing to his bodily resurrection and not out of any need. Digestion of food was thus beside the point, even if he did eat. Forty days in the flesh between his resurrection and ascension were therefore dramatically different from before, for they could as easily have been the thousand years that are like a single day to Deity. He was still on earth and yet he wasn't.

But it is too much for us to contemplate. We see only "puzzling reflections in a mirror," as the *New English* renders 1 Cor. 13:12. Paul likens it to the wonder of humble seed being transformed into a majestic stand of wheat. One would have to see it to believe it. And we run the risk of being the foolish man he refers to if we venture too far from what is actually written.

Alexander Campbell was wonderfully impressed by the few reflections we do have of our future glory, and that of our earth, especially as he grew older. I pass along to you the last article he ever penned, only a few months before he went home, on that Sunday afternoon in March, 1866. Here is the last thing he ever wrote:

"The present material universe, yet unrevealed in all its area, in all its tenantries, in all its riches, beauty and grandeur, will be wholly regenerated. Of this fact we have full assurance: since he that now sits upon the Throne of the Universe, has pledged his word for it, saying, `Behold, I will create all things new;' - consequently `new heavens, new earth,' consequently new tenantries, new employment, new pleasures, new joys, new ecstasies. There is a fullness of joy, a fullness of glory, and a fullness of blessedness, of which no living man, however enlightened, however enlarged, however gifted, ever formed or entertained one adequate conception."

Now if in the new heavens and new earth we find ourselves lined up at some elegant latrine alongside the river of life you will know that I was wrong, that we do have bladders as well as bodies. And I will apologize to my physician. But since we all agree that there will be no surgeons there, I am not sure I could find him, with or without his celestial wives! - *Editor*

All this, and heaven too! — Matthew Henry

A robin redbreast in a cage puts all heaven in a rage. — *William Blake*

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ROOTS: THEIRS AND OURS

The TV presentation, *Roots,* based on Alex Haley's novel, scored something of a coup in its recent 12-hour showing. The production people say that TV will never be the same, for *Roots* will turn the industry in a different direction in home entertainment. Something like 200 million Americans saw at least part of it, which makes it the most successful "cram course" in the history of education. And its lessons came across with no uncertain sound, even though it set off a debate that will go on and on. Potential advertisers were hesitant to buy time in that they did not think whites would be all that interested in the story of a black family, which was a reasonable conclusion. But everyone was in for a surprise, Alex Haley included. He be came a celebrity almost overnight.

I presume that at least two out of three readers of this journal watched the series, and surely the reactions among them would be as varied as with other segments of our society across the land, black and white alike. The general reaction among whites, so the reports indicate, is that they did not realize that slavery was so grossly evil. A common reaction among the blacks was anger and resentment. A black boy in a Dallas school was led to beat up on some white boys in revenge for the way Kunta Kinte was treated. Other blacks were saying, 1 *told you* so*!,* while other whites were nursing their guilt feelings. Whites and blacks alike were made more conscious of their history, and in a TV interview Alex Haley said that many people he had met expressed interest in looking back into their own roots.

The point of this essay is not to review what appeared on the TV screen or in the novel itself (which I read only in condensed form), but to look at "roots" from a different perspective - in reference to our own history as Christian Churches-Churches of Christ. As I watched the story on TV, I found myself comparing dates and events in Disciple history, asking my self where "we" were then and what we were doing, even in reference to slavery itself. When Kunta Kinte was captured in Africa, the Glas-Sandeman Haldane reform was brewing in Scotland. At this time the British had already revolted against the slave trade and by 1772 had passed a law that if ever a slave sets foot on one of their isles he would automatically be a free man. It was largely the work of the Quakers, who almost single-handedly staged such opposition against the system as to arouse all of England. About the time Kizzie was sold by her master, separating her from her parents, Alexander Campbell began his work of reform in this country, knowing almost nothing about the institution of slavery. By the time Chicken George was bargaining with his master for freedom in Virginia, Campbell was in the Constitutional Convention of the same state using his influence against the system that enslaved him. When the "Night Riders" were working havoc among recalcitrant blacks, Isaac Errett was writing in behalf of justice for blacks as editor of the youthful *Christian Standard.*

We were there, that's for sure. In 1850, the year of the Fugitive Slave Law (as well as the year Campbell addressed both houses of Congress, based on Jn 3:16, in a plea for peace on the grounds of God's philanthropy), we had 310 churches in the South and 543 in the North. It was reported by the Anti-Slavery Society that our people owned 101,000 slaves, while the Methodists and Baptists jointly owned upwards of half a million, which would make the Church of Christ on a *per capita* basis, the largest slave-holding church. What was the attitude of our folk toward the slaves and how did they treat them? A few facts and scenes from here and there might be interesting.

1. Barton Stone owned slaves but set them free soon after the great revival at Cane Ridge, as did the families that made up our first "Christian" congregation at Cane Ridge. Some slaves continued as members at Cane Ridge, occupying the balcony during services. In many churches believing female slaves sat with their masters to help care for the children.

2. Alexander Campbell wrote in 1845 (*Mill. Harb., p.* 259): "1 have set free from slavery every human being that came in any way under my influence or was my property." His wife Selina wrote in her *Home Life* that Alexander. bought two black boys from a Methodist preacher, promising them their freedom after a few years, which he granted. He also had other slaves, probably inherited from his father-in-law, which he also set free. He put them on a pension once they were liberated.

3. We also have documentation from an ex-slave, who became a bishop in his church, that he personally witnessed Mr. Campbell "with his own hands baptize many colored men and women." This was common among our people in that day. The slaves would drive their masters to "meetin' " and linger in the yard and listen to the preaching. The simplicity of our Plea appealed to them (they couldn't even understand most preaching!) and they would request baptism, which was usually performed by the master. It was common for our slaveholding brothers to teach and immerse their slaves, and then bring them into the assembly. Many a lean-to were built to accommodate them in buildings where there was no balcony, and they *never* in those days encouraged separate churches. Old church rolls from those days show whites and blacks listed together. One entry read: Ella (Parrott's). That meant that Ella, though a sister in the Lord and a member of the congregation, was owned by the Parrott family, also members in most cases. An odd part of this story is that once freedom came many Negroes rejected their master's baptism and were rebaptized by a black preacher. And we did have numerous black ministers.

4. One black, preacher was named, believe it or not, Alexander Campbell, who was some years older than the white Alexander Campbell. Converted at Cane Ridge, his master set him free to preach to those of his own race. Working also as a janitor, he saved enough money, with some help from his former master, to buy his wife's freedom. Alexander and Rosa (you'll want to remember their names since you'll be meeting them one day) reared two sons who also became preachers.

5. Another slave, Alexander Cross, obeyed the gospel and showed such promise that in 1850 the newly formed American Christian Missionary Society bought him, set him free, educated him and sent him to Liberia as a missionary.

6. As early as 1819 Thomas Campbell, then living in Burlington, Ky., invited some Negroes who were milling around a grove one Sunday to his meetinghouse. They gladly accepted. He sang hymns with them and taught them the scriptures. He was reprimanded for this, being reminded that Negroes could not be addressed except in the presence of one or more whites. Indignant over such injustice, he declared that he was shaking the dust of such a community from his feet, and moved away in protest. They tried to lure him back since they needed him as a teacher, but he was adamant in his decision. And he also liked to move!

7. Sarah Parsons, a white girl, heard the gospel from Elder Samuel Rogers while visiting with relatives, but she was deemed by her physician to be too ill to be immersed. Returning home to Griswold, Mo., she asked her father to baptize her, but he declined, not believing himself worthy of such an act. She had learned enough to assure him that it did not matter who performed the act. When he still refused, word went out to preachers here and there to come and help the sick girl obey the Lord, but preachers were scarce. She finally prevailed upon a Negro "Mammy" who was known for her Christian piety to baptize her. A tub was prepared in the house and the old Negro servant immersed her mistress into Christ. The girl died soon after this. When Elder Rogers came for the funeral, he immersed several others who had been led to Jesus by Sarah's faith. A sick white girl immersed by a black woman slave! How would that have gone over in Haley's TV story?

8. One slave who became a preacher, William O'Neal, was hired away from his owner by one of his white brothers in the Lord and was put to work preaching to other slaves. Like the black Alexander Campbell, he also worked as a barrelmaker and made enough money (along with a $2,000.00 gift from a white brother) to buy his and his wife's freedom. They had no children, but adopted six orphans into their home, *one of which was white!*

These stories out of our own history, along with numerous others, reveal that the white man's nobler impulses were not completely dormant during our antebellum period, as Haley's novel largely implies, and that our own people in the Christian Churches were not so completely duped by the

slavery system as to lose all semblance of Christian charity. The way Haley tells it, the blacks were the good guys in white hats and the whites were the bad guys in black hats. We must not be mislead into believing that the blacks were all noble and the whites ignoble, which, with but few exceptions, is Haley's thesis. About the only reason a man would own a slave girl is that he might sleep with her! That was, of course, a common evil in a cruel system, causing Abraham Lincoln to bemoan a situation in which men sell their own sons on the auction block, but *Roots* is a classic example of over-playing a fact of history.

Except for one or two rather illustrious exceptions, *Roots* presented every white character as bestial, and these exceptions were mostly the poor, ignorant whites. Why not depict such a scene as Thomas Campbell in Kentucky flouting an unjust law in order to sing, pray and study with slaves? Since he didn't get the job he wanted in Washington and would have had time for it, Ronald Reagan would have played an elegant Thomas Campbell, with the proper head dress of course. I can see Ronnie approaching the idle blacks with compassion, inviting them to worship -just he and the blacks worshipping together in a humble cottage. Being a Disciple, Reagan could lead a beautiful scene of white teacher and black slaves together with the Lord, and he would teach them magnificently and simply from the Book, like only Thomas Campbell, "the man of the Book," could. And what righteous indignation he would show when called in question for teaching the scriptures to any of God's children! Reagan could really have done it right.

Or why not have a few scenes of whites making financial sacrifices in order to free their black brothers so that they might preach the gospel? How about a scene with the distinguished Alexander Campbell pleading with the legislators of Virginia, following the Nat Turner uprising in 1831 when the legislators met to try to resolve the blight of slavery: "It is in the power of Virginia to free herself from this evil without loss of property . . . to deliver us and our brethren in the East from all the curses, direct and indirect, which are found hanging upon that vine brought from Africa . . . If you do this you will have the countenance, support, prayers, and thanks of every Virginian in all the hills and valleys of the West." Shall we give that part to Charlton Heston?

How about a scene of the Cane Ridge revival, after which all the families of Barton Stone's congregation, following his example, one by one freed their slaves. Or of a missionary convention buying, freeing, educating a slave for the mission field,

Well, scenes like these would not fit Haley's purposes. In his research he was looking for blood, the whip and chains, and fornicators - and of course he found them since they too were there. He found his ancestors to be noble savages, highly intelligent even if uneducated, and so magnificent as to be free of vengeance! When Tom Harper overpowered the white man, he returned good for evil! He has no Nat Turners in his family tree, not even any blacks too irresponsible to have handled freedom if it were

given to them. Barton Stone gave time, money and effort to free the slaves so that they could be colonized in Liberia, as some were. But he insisted that if the slaves were freed suddenly and turned loose upon society, as the radical abolitionists wanted to do, that he himself would flee the country! They must not have generally been as smart, peaceful, loving, and enterprising as Chicken George and Tom Harper.

I am for giving a novelist his rights, but when 200 million Americans are led to believe that they are seeing history on TV some of us also have the right to insist upon a more balanced presentation. Many of our people, heretofore with only blurred concepts of American slavery, will think of that horrid system only in terms of the whip and fornicating white masters. They will not think of a compromising Henry Clay, an agonizing Abraham Lincoln, or a praying Alexander Campbell, not to mention thousands of sincere Americans who were victimized by a system handed to them by fate and over which they had no control, and who could not have freed their slaves if they had dared to, many of whom demonstrated such concern and benevolence toward their slaves as to make rich drama for either stage or screen. People can be caught up in an evil situation without they themselves behaving sinfully, just as in a war.

Another thing about all this for the believer is that our roots are in the loins of Abraham, the father of faithful, and not in either Africa or early America, whether we be black or white. One's roots cannot only become an obsession, as they apparently did to Haley, but an exercise in arrogance. Suppose some ancestor did come over on the Mayflower or was once an African prince after the order of O. J. Simpson. So what? What does that make you? The believer is what he is because of Jesus, and his citizenship as well as his roots are in heaven.

We are pilgrims in this world and neither Africa nor America is out home. We look for a city with foundations, whose builder and maker is God, not to any place in this evil world. Those are the roots that should concern us, and with such an awareness of our true roots we might start bearing the right fruit: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, honesty, gentleness, self-mastery.

Such fruit will eventually so nourish society as to weed out all forms of tyranny over both body and mind. Physical slavery still holds some three millions captive in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Arabia and Northern Africa. Many millions more are enslaved through various forms of self-imposed tyranny, whether it be egoism, narcotics or willful ignorance. Institutions, including churches, enslave still more through partyism and obscurantism, and these mar the soul and oppress the spirit as much as any bull whip ever did.

Roots and fruit are the only answer. The apostle Paul thought the fruit was answer enough for Onesimus when he penned a note to his master, Philemon. Perhaps Philemon could not or should not set him free, not then at least, but he could love him. And that is where freedom has to begin, whether for Kunta Kinte or for us. *—the Editor*

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EDUCATING THE WHOLE MAN

In these days when young people and parents alike are giving even a college education a hard critical look, as if it might not be worth four years of a person's life after all, we do well to remain open as to what really constitutes a sound education. This is especially true for the Christian, for by the very nature of what he professes to believe he has ardent interest in the development of personhood. It could otherwise be referred to as the education of the whole man - physical, social, intellectual and spiritual. Aristotle insisted that all education is *moral,* and we could think of all four of these aspects of education as moral. And yet it is the moral aspect of education that never seems to receive proper attention, partly due to the inert notion that morality cannot be taught.

For one to be wholly educated, or even educated to be holy, there must be moral education, and I for one believe that this can be structured in terms of content and curriculum. That is, there are moral or ethical principles just as there are economic principles, and there are moral truths as much as there are scientific truths, and so ethics can and must be taught, just as economics and the sciences are to be taught.

The colleges themselves are taking a closer look at what it means to be an educated person, and their search reflects a humility that heretofore has not been so evident, and that is encouraging. We are likely to learn more about what it means to be educated wholly when we concede that none of us has all the answers, and that even our educational institutions have done something less than an adequate job.

One such call for more self-examination on the part of colleges comes from none other than Harvard itself. Under the title "What makes the best college education?," Dean Henry Rosovsky in *Harvard Today* (Fall, 1976) reveals that Harvard's faculty has reached a "critical juncture" after a year of intense deliberation as to what its educational program should be. It appears evident that some basic changes will be made. The dean presents six standards that he considers valid in determining what education should be. It is noteworthy that none of these necessarily implies a college education, and they suggest that education is a lifetime pursuit, whether aided by years in college or not. I think they

speak to the Christian conscience in that we should be especially aware in our homes and churches of what a continual improvement of ourselves and our children should involve. Here is a summary of Dean Rosovsky's standards.

1. An educated person must be able to think and write clearly and effectively. He should be able to communicate precisely, cogently and forcefully.

2. He should have a critical appreciation of the ways in which we gain knowledge and understanding of the universe, of society and of ourselves. This does not mean that we can all be experts in physics, math, history, social sciences and the humanities, but as we grow from year to year we should have an increased *appreciation* for these ways of knowledge.

3. Our world being what it now is, a person cannot be ignorant of other cultures and other times. It is no longer possible for us to conduct our lives without reference to the wider world or to the historical forces that have shaped the present and will shape the future.

4. The educated person is to have some understanding of, and experience in thinking about, moral problems. While these issues change very little over the centuries, they acquire a new urgency for each generation. It may well be that the most significant quality in educated persons is the informed judgment that enables him to make discriminating moral choices.

5. We should expect an educated person to have good manners and high aesthetic and moral standards. This implies the capacity to reject shoddiness in all its forms.

6. He should have achieved depth in some field of knowledge or service. He should have a constructive way of making a living.

What impressed me especially about this list are numbers 4 and 5, and I suspect some of our readers will be surprised to see such old-fashioned values being stressed by a Harvard dean. It is noteworthy that he sees the capacity to make responsible moral decisions as the most significant. quality of an educated person. To some of us this is to say that education is to be *religious* or *spiritual*, that there are transcendental values involved. Surely if one is to be qualified to make tough moral decisions he is to be exposed to moral principles, to be trained in ethical thinking. One does not become morally responsible, as Dean Rosovsky wants him to be, simply through *general* education, no more than one could be expected to make critical economic decisions without knowing something of the fundamentals of economics.

It is refreshing to read of an educator at an elite university stressing good manners as fundamental to education. I know not a few Ph.D.'s that are not yet educated in this respect. One who has no qualms about blowing his smoke in your face, or who habitually interrupts when someone tries to say something to him, or the know-it-all who cannot listen sympathetically to an inquiring student, is grossly lacking in his education. Good manners are sometimes called minor morals, but let's just say they are a part of the moral education that the dean is calling for. And if we must have courses in which people are taught to be decent and civil, then I say let's have the courses.

Another way of saying what the dean is calling for in numbers 4 and 5 is that education is to reach the heart as well as the head. *Education of the heart!* We don't hear much about that, and yet man is probably motivated more by the heart than by the head in most of his behavior. We certainly do not educate a poet or an artist or a musician, perhaps not anybody at all, if we work only on the head. Take the likes of Robert Burns as an example. He was a poor peasant boy who stole the hearts of the Scots by his songs and poems that throbbed with warm human emotion. A person is not quite the same who imbibes the spirit of "John Anderson My Jo" or "A Man's a Man for A' That." Bobby Burns learned somehow to touch the heart, and what power that is! Those of us who educate need to learn that art on a more general scale, even if not as intense. Even the study of geography can include the geography of human need.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn is another example. One commentator who sat with him during an interview said something to the effect that the Russian novelist's message to the world has a moral urgency about it. Is education really adequate that does not convey something of this quality in a person's view of himself and the world?

Christians should be bold in their faith by insisting that education is learning to walk with God. St. Luke records that Jesus of Nazareth "advanced in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man," which says something about what education should be. Christ-likeness is the essence of the Christian faith, and to the believer it is at the very heart of all education. When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment of all, it was something like raising the question of what makes for a good education. Jesus' reply was that man is to love God with all his personality and he is to love his neighbor as himself.

Dean Rosovsky quotes William Cory, master of Eton, as saying to a group of young men back in 1861: "You go to a great school, not for knowledge so much as for arts and habits." Is this not what Jesus was saying? Loving is not merely knowing about things, but it is *doing* for people. St. Paul's words in his love hymn of 1 Cor. 13 is even more direct: "Knowledge (alone) puffs up, but love builds up." So we can say that education is a matter of *learning, laboring* and *loving.*

The other four standards that the dean lists are more generally recognized, but even these are set forth in fresher, crisper terms. They, too, remind the Christian that while he may be a pilgrim in this world he is not a wanderer. To be educated Christians we must come to know the world better and to serve it more responsibly and resourcefully. *—the Editor*

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Pilgrimage of Joy . . .

THE GLORY OF MUTTON HOLLOW

W. Carl Ketcherside

Upon our return after more than three months of absence we found the congregation of saints at Nevada in an excellent state. Under the guidance of the bishops, and with the cooperation of the other brethren, the morale was high and the size of the audiences remained at such an excellent level there was serious talk of erecting a new meetinghouse. In every congregation of that day, almost fifty years ago, especially those with a rural constituency, there were always brethren who had scruples and qualms about certain things. However, at Nevada, the others did not try to press an opposing view but graciously accommodated themselves so they would not "set at naught a brother" and thus peace was maintained.

It was decided to bring a luncheon one Sunday and spread tables in the rear of the meetinghouse at noon so all could eat together and be present for an afternoon session in which to discuss the subject of erecting a new house. One brother objected on the ground that his conscience would not allow him to eat in "the Lord's house" or in a place secured with "the Lord's money." No one argued with him about the fact the Lord's house consisted of living stones and not of concrete and boards. In deference to his conscience they rented a hall for the meal and everyone was happy. Two years later, the weak brother had become strong enough to outgrow his scruple on the matter and we could eat together in the basement without objection.

The word for scruple is from the Latin scrupulous, and refers to "a little pebble in the shoe." Such a foreign object pains no one but the wearer of the shoe and those who do not feel the twinge must slow down until the weak brother can walk with them. Eventually, he may recognize that the pebble is not an essential part of the shoe and remove it to his comfort and the quickened pace of himself and others. The fact that we walk in the Spirit does not mean we all have the same gait. We should neither drive our brothers away nor run off from them. It is the stronger who must slow down for the weak cannot walk any faster until they also become strong.

It was decided we would wreck the old meetinghouse and salvage any material possible and erect the new one ourselves, since we had several brethren who could oversee the construction. The sisters would take turns providing food for the workers at noon. There was a sufficiently large crew the day

we started so that we wrecked the old building and stacked the material in one day. When we ,began the new one, several men from the community with carpentry skills volunteered their labor. Some of them were immersed into Christ before the new structure was completed.

Only one incident marred the proceeding. When the framework was up some of the brethren sitting around eating their luncheon suggested we should take out insurance upon it to cover the cost of construction in case of wind, fire or other damage. One brother hooted at the idea and protested emphatically. He declared that it was the Lord's work and the Lord would protect it. He insisted that nothing adverse would happen either to the structure or to anyone working on it, and to take out insurance would be to show a lack of faith in God. He said, "it would be a shame to insure the Lord's property with unbelievers." Three days later he fell off of a scaffold and broke his arm. We took him to an "unbelieving doctor" to set the bones.

Although the new auditorium seated more than twice as many as the former structure it was filled to capacity the very first Sunday night. It had been so long since a religious group had outgrown their structure that people flocked in to see what was happening. In spite of our narrowness and provincialism, or perhaps because of it, the number of the disciples grew.

One of my favorite areas in "God's vineyard" was the Missouri Ozarks in the region around Springfield and south to the Arkansas line. I held my first meeting in "the Queen City of the Ozarks" when I was a mere lad. It was in a tent on North National Boulevard. After thus being introduced to the region I began to conduct meetings in rural areas off the beaten track. At Walnut Hill the community gave us an excellent hearing and I liked the place because after the evening services we could turn the dogs loose in the timber along the James River and go coon hunting the rest of the night. Here I also got my first taste of fox hunting.

It was during one of my visits to Springfield that brethren from Nixa, a village some twelve miles south, came to interview me and invite me to hold a three week gospel meeting for them. When I began on the third Sunday in September I inaugurated a custom that became an annual affair and continued until I had held thirteen meetings, baptizing some two hundred persons. In this little community of about three hundred population there were three or four religious edifices, but the largest was owned by the Church of Christ.

There were three elders — John Bennett, Otis Stine and Jonas Parsons. The first-named had been a rural schoolteacher until retirement. Then he became president of the local bank and general advisor to the community. Since I stayed in his home during many of these meetings I became well acquainted with him and met scores of people who came to him to help them draw up legal documents and even to write letters for them, since some of them were virtually uneducated and could not "put their thoughts down on paper." The congregation was given prestige by the number of people who studied the Word every day and became proficient in it. A wealth of talent was developed and the congregation grew strong under the guidance of their shepherds.

Every year during our annual meeting I was invited to speak in a number of high schools in the area. I recall that a few of them had makeshift buildings and inadequate classroom facilities, but the concern of the teachers and their dedication to their profession made up for the physical lack. Some high school students were from such poverty-stricken homes they came to school barefoot, bringing lunch pails or sacks containing cold biscuits and sorghum molasses. No days were ever wasted during my three week preaching stints for people arranged meetings and announced them by word of mouth so that I spoke from the porches of country stores or at sawmills and grist mills where native people gathered. The men chewed tobacco and listened with gravity while the women held the children and heard me gladly.

When such meetings were not possible all of us gathered at the home where I was to eat the noonday meal, the women bringing food to spread together, and while there were no formal meetings we sat and talked together well into the afternoon. These were times of simple enjoyment where hearts were cemented together by the love of God and all of us grew in knowledge of the Book as we discussed controverted passages. They were especially profitable to me because of the simple unadorned lives of the people enriched by their constant contact with the divine revelation. Some years I stayed in a different home every night of the three weeks, and often I have blown out the kerosene lamp and tumbled into a bed where the tick was filled with straw or corn shucks, and slept like a log because of physical exhaustion.

The baptizing was done in the beautiful crystal-clear James River. One Sunday afternoon a huge audience gathered on the gravel bar to see twenty-three persons immersed into the relationship involved in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Often baptism was performed at night. Cars would be driven to the spot and parked so their lights could be focused on the river. Fish could be seen swimming in the depths. Night birds blended their plaintive calls with the songs of the believers.

Not all such gatherings were as peaceful as this. A year before Nell and I were married, I pitched a tent near Bull Creek and stayed a week by myself. I had been in the "Shepherd of the Hills" country, made famous by Harold Bell Wright, even prior to this, when I was seventeen. This was before the days of the tourist invasion and the only way to travel the region was in an old taxi driven by Mrs. Pearl Spurlock who lived in Branson and made daily trips through the area to accommodate people who stopped over between trains. Most of the roads were merely gravel-strewn trails and the sites featured by Wright were still existent.

Mutton Hollow was an unspoiled wilderness, and one could view its glory from Sammy Lane's Lookout. Preachin' Bill's barn stood to indicate where his log cabin had been and one could walk up "the trail nobody knows how old" to the cabin of Uncle Matt and Aunt Mollie. Uncle Ike, the postmaster at the crossroads, was still living, a bearded patriarch with a Harvard degree who chose to live in solitude but who was anxious enough to visit with me when I met him. The country got into my blood and I decided to go back and camp by myself away from any habitation, and think things out. I

selected the right place. Every day I could see the blue haze dropping down on faraway hills and every evening while sitting by the campfire I could hear the eerie hoot of owls and the lonely cry of the whip-poorwills.

I saw but two persons in the whole week. A couple of moonshiners came to investigate and assure themselves I was not a revenue agent searching for their stills. They cautioned me not to go up the hollow across the creek from my tent and ask questions afterward. When they learned I was a preacher they immediately proposed that I speak at the schoolhouse on Friday night since the community "hadn't hearn no preachin' since God knowed when." They offered to "norate it around" so I consented.

I didn't realize that such occasions were generally used as an excuse for resumption of feuds although I noticed when the hour drew near for the meeting to begin a lot of the men were talking a little too loudly and the smell of liquid corn pervaded the air. The women and children went inside and so did a few of the men. The rest lounged around outside and their voices could be heard as I announced the first song. Since few knew it and there were no books, I sang but one verse. It was just as I was preparing to read an introductory chapter that someone outside called through an open window to a man inside, using an unmentionable epithet, and daring him to come outside. Without hesitation the one who was challenged climbed up on the seat and dived through the window, knocking the prop out as he went.

In a matter of seconds the place was in an uproar with everyone pressing toward the door. Outside the drunken frenzied mob was already engaged in a free-swinging melee. It was not necessary to choose up sides. Everyone knew what side he was on when he arrived. Rocks flew freely. The moonlight glinted off the sharp blades of Barlow knives. When two sheriff's deputies arrived, those who could not walk were loaded into cars and taken to Branson to be sewed up.

Later I became good friends with some of the "feuders" who had served terms in the state penitentiary. One in particular was a mere lad when he and his father lay flat on their stomachs at the edge of their woods, resting rifles upon the fence rails to shoot down a neighbor and his two sons working in the field. They did it to fulfill a "blood oath" laid upon them by the boy's grandfather while he was dying from a gunshot wound. When I met the one-time boy he had "done his time" and had been released. He had married a girl from the hills and they welcomed me to their home. I baptized the whole family as well as some members of the opposite clan. When I was preaching anywhere within forty miles the former "sworn enemies" came together to hear me, bringing as many of their neighbors as they could get on the truck.

The year of 1931 was memorable in our lives for several reasons. For one thing, Nell again became pregnant and suffered a lot from nausea and discomfort during the summer months. We were fortunate that we had been virtually adopted by George and Minnie Kryselmier who not only came to get Jerry often because they adored him, but also had us at their house for meals with great regularity when George was home from a trip on the Missouri Pacific which he served as an engineer. Minnie was a

superb cook with an old-fashioned flair and we would visit at the table for a long time unless there was a special radio program on WLS "the Prairie Farmer Station" in Chicago. Since we were too poor to own a radio ourselves, any specially announced program was an excuse to visit the Kryselmiers, who generally honored the arrangement by inviting us to eat with them. We never rejected the invitation.

It was in 1931 we bought our first house. A rather lovely six-room bungalow with a large porch in front became vacant and was offered for sale at $3,100.00 I had never been on a salary and never charged for my services. I simply took what the brethren gave me as I have continued to do through the years. At the time I was averaging about $25.00 per week and we had another baby on the way. But we wanted a place of our own, so we borrowed $300 for the initial payment from Nell's brother Arvel, and began the monthly payments which we continued more than ten years. Nell and I were both troubled about being in debt. To this day we dislike owing anyone anything "but to love one another" and we sense a real relief when a bill is paid.

It was early in the morning of December 10, 1931, that Nell awakened to tell me she had felt her first pains. At this time I had developed a better "husband image" and proceeded with arrangements with more method and less excitement than when Jerry was born twenty-seven months previously. I summoned Dr. Stanley Love, son of the man who delivered Jerry, and he arrived with greater alacrity than did his father. It was a good thing he did because Nell was in labor but little more than an hour when our baby girl joined the family circle to be given the previously agreed upon name of Sharon Sue. She weighed ten pounds, and Sister Edwards, who again helped us in this critical time, commented upon what a well-formed and happy baby she was right from the start.

Jerry suffered no emotional trauma because a new life had come to share the attention of his parents. We had carefully prepared him in advance until he experienced the same joyful anticipation as ourselves. When Sue was awake he would stand by her little bed and try to get her to smile at him. It was no great task as she was ready to do so with the least personal attention. Life again became a smoothly functioning routine for all of us except that Nell once more had to include the daily bathing of and attention to a chubby little cherubic being.

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DOWN HOME

My latest book, a revised edition of *The Twisted Scriptures*, came from the press on February 18. It deals with these passages which brethren have misused to justify division among the saints. The cost is $3.25 per copy ... My next book *Talks to Jews and Non-Jews will* be released by Standard Publishing Company, June 15. It will contain a number of my talks made to Jews and my answers to their questions. The last half of the book is my analysis of the Hebrew letter. The publishers have set a retail

price of $4.95 on the book .... I was blessed by being asked to deliver five addresses at the Midwinter Conference of Minnesota Bible College, at Rochester, Minnesota, February 2-4. Audiences numbered into the hundreds and the spirit was excellent. Charles R. Davis was the Bible expositor and did an excellent job on the letter to Titus. It was a great privilege for me to stay in the home of my brother in the Lord, Earl Grice . ... The Pacific Christian College Alumni Association made it possible for me to be their speaker at the annual lectureship at Pacific Christian College, Fullerton, California. Since I stayed in the Men's dormitory which also houses students from Fullerton State which adjoins it, our encounters were rich and varied . . . We will send a free copy of my book *The Death of the Custodian* to any college or university student who writes for it and states the name of the college where enrolled. We have sent over 525 free copies of the book to students in six months ... I will be speaking at the Annual Preaching Conference sponsored by Boise Bible College, Boise, Idaho, May 3-5, where I shall be associated with three other brethren who are great servants of God -Alan Dunbar, John Loekoek and Dale Marshall. The Theme is "United in Him." ... May 18 - 20 will find me with New Hope Christian Church, outside Columbus, Indiana. I am looking forward to working with Matt Malott, a young saint who is dedicated to the work of the King ... I will again have the opportunity in both April and May of speaking to the men and women of the Messianic Forum, and I trust that you will pray for a genuine breakthrough of the Spirit in these Jewish hearts ... On May 15, I will address the disciples at Franor Avenue, in Alton, Illinois, on the occasion of their twenty-fifth anniversary ... Another great blessing will come to me when I share with the brethren in the Cavalier Men's Retreat, at Mechanicsville, near Richmond, Virginia, June 3, 4 ... Recently I have delivered a series of studies on the Revelation letter which were taped in the process. If you would like to know about them you may send a self-addressed stamped envelope to T. N. Ratliff, 9729 Calumet Drive, Saint Louis, Missouri 63137 ... You may also secure a list of several hundred of my tapes by writing to Vernon H. Woods, 2413 Dale Avenue, Eugene, Oregon 97401, and enclosing a large stamped envelope with your address on it. —*W. Carl Ketcherside, 139 Signal Hill Drive, Saint Louis, Missouri 63121.*

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Monthly Musing . . .

A PULPITEER'S DILEMMA

Robert Meyers

I have been reading again, with greater appreciation, John Middleton Murry's *Not As The Scribes,* a collection of short religious talks which the famed literary scholar made to members of his communal farm family. In one place he tells the group that he is speaking for the last time from a pulpit. He says that in the last few times he has done this there has come upon him "an increasing sense of some

fundamental incompatibility between a pulpit and myself. A pulpit is, I feel, a place where a man should utter certainties; I possess no certainties. And nothing fills me with a more profound and painful misgiving than the fear that I may be suggesting to others that I am certain, when I am not."

I can sympathize readily with this, although Murry overstates his doubts. He admits this later, but the admission is not necessary; no one can read his collection of Sunday evening talks without discovering at least one overwhelming certainty which is stated as brilliantly as it has ever been by anyone.

That certainty is the one which also sustains me: that love is the absolute and ultimate value, and that the meaningfulness of life depends upon the earnestness with which one seeks to know what love is and how it may be turned loose to work in any given context.

I resist the pressure I often feel to be certain about all kinds of other things. Perhaps a part of my reluctance is explained in Murry's own apology. He says that the cause of his hesitation and misgivings is that he is a man of letters. "That is to say, my mind has long inhabited a world in which downright and positive assertions concerning the nature of things have singularly little place."

I am no "man of letters" in the sense John Murry was, but the academic world I inhabit *does* make devastating assaults upon one's certainties and dares him to be positive about very much. To read the different responses, for example, which equally capable critics make to great works of art is to understand that one cannot enforce a single meaning upon the whole world. To read the great works for oneself is to enter a world of such complexity and richness that no credal formula can possibly capture it all.

When one turns, then, to that most amazing collection of literature in the world, the Bible, he finds such diversity and wealth that dogmatism seems equally impossible. Despite the easy jeers at open-mindedness ("His mind is open all right, just like a sieve; everything he learns runs right on through it!"), I find myself ever more humbled before the complexities of the Bible.

What is left for me is, first, honesty in the confession of what I believe at a given moment in my growing life and, second, a conviction of the preeminence of love. Holding these, I shall be able to stand in a pulpit before audiences with some understanding of the tentative nature of life and faith.

The cross is "I" crossed out. —*Anonymous*

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OFFICE NOTES

Robert Shank's *God's Tomorrow* is about life beyond death. He had to take it off the market because some Church of Christ leaders object to its being so literal about heaven, so it is presently circulating only in non-Church of Christ circles. But we have a box full and they are available at $2.20. You'd better get one as soon as you can, for once the ban is lifted everyone will want to read it to see what the fuss is all about. The author explained to an elder who was complaining about a point in it, "After all, Rev. 21:1 *does* say, "I saw a new heaven and a new *earth."* The elder replied, "I never read Revelation!" Whether you read Revelation or not, this book will bless you.

People must be interested in heaven, for we have already sold a box full of *Hereafter: What Happens After Death?* by David Winter at $1.70. Ken Taylor, creator of *Living Bible,* says of it, "This book can radically change your life," and LB. Phillips, another translator, says the book precisely echoes his conclusions. While you are ordering you should get *Closer Than a Brother* by the same author for $2.00, which takes a great devotional classic (Brother Lawrence) and interprets it in the light of the 1970's. You'll see how a humble hospital worker walked with God in our turbulent world. So, it is the Father Himself who is closer than a brother.

We have available two of William Barclay's less known titles: *The King and the Kingdom* and *The Old Law and the New Law,* at $2.70 each. Another title, which he did back in 1961, *The Promise of the Spirit, is* $4.00.

We urge upon you two new books by A.M. Hunter, that brilliant and lucid British scholar. *Interpreting the Parables* at $2.90 and *Gleanings from the New Testament* at $5.70, both in soft cover. Hunter is to be highly recommended since he combines scholarship with simplicity of style.

Dare to Discipline in paperback at $3.20 is a very readable and helpful book. It is a Christian psychologist's urgent advice to both teachers and parents.

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Address all mail to: 1201 Windsor Dr., Denton, TX 76201*

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